

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Polehampton Church of England Infant School	
Address	Hermitage Drive, Twyford, RG10 9HS
School vision	
<p>Let your light shine Matthew 5:16</p> <p>These words of Jesus are at the heart of our school's vision. They inspire and motivate our whole school community. Jesus reminded us in Matthew's gospel that we are lights for the world. As we seek to follow him, we can share his light with others and change the world!</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's Christian vision determines and shapes the rich learning experiences that leaders provide. This supports pupils to 'let their light shine', thus embracing life in all its fullness. • Polehampton's vision has inspired leaders to develop learning experiences that are tailored to the needs of its community. This creates a purposeful environment where pupils are keen to shine through their personal efforts and achievements. • Collective worship is central to promoting the school's vision. Its content successfully addresses the needs of the pupils. It fosters their sense of personal growth as they learn to be 'shining lights' to those around them. • Positive mental health and wellbeing are prioritised in this inclusive community. Consequently, effective pastoral care allows 'dimming lights to be restored'. • Religious education (RE) is highly effective. It incorporates an age-appropriate emphasis on asking questions, gathering information, and reflecting. Moderation of RE across The Keys Academy Trust (TKAT) schools enables leaders to establish clearly defined progression in learning. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for positive and reciprocal relationships within the wider world. This is to ensure pupils develop the understanding and skills to become thoughtful and successful global citizens. • Refine opportunities for staff to express, plan, and evaluate the current rich spiritual experiences across the curriculum. This is to evaluate their effectiveness and further enhance pupils' spiritual development. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Polehampton Infant School is characterised by the commitment of its leaders and staff to apply the Christian vision in all they do. They articulate with clarity how it shapes every aspect of school life. Leaders are well supported by the additional capacity provided by TKAT. Furthermore, they benefit from a highly successful relationship with Polehampton Junior School, which is also part of the TKAT. As a result, resources and expertise, such as shared leadership and governance, benefit both.</p>	

In partnership, the school and Trust create opportunities for members of the school community to shine brightly. They ensure the vision is lived out strategically and operationally, thus shaping pupils' rich experiences. Additionally, an embedded relationship with the parish church extends and deepens the school's vision. It exemplifies leaders' commitment to see pupils shine and flourish within the wider community.

Polehampton's vision inspires leaders to develop learning experiences that are tailored to the needs of pupils. Teaching encompasses the school's '3Cs of learning: community, curiosity, and cultural diversity'. In addition, a 'Super Learners' programme, delivered by animal characters such as Resilient Rhino, helps pupils to master new skills. The vision creates a purposeful environment where pupils 'let their light shine' through their personal achievements. Furthermore, the school day is enhanced by a wealth of extra-curricular experiences such as dance, drama, football, and gymnastics. Teachers meet pupils' individual learning needs successfully, reflecting the vision's emphasis on everyone shining. They are dedicated to pupils' academic, social, and spiritual success. Those who need extra help are well-supported. Additionally, the '3Cs' curriculum helps pupils understand that they are part of a local and national community. For example, pupils learn about renowned advocates of positive social change, and consequently they support age-appropriate ethical actions. These include litter picking, recycling, and engagement with charitable events such as National Hedgehog Day and World Bee Day. Through their learning and actions, pupils understand that they can bring about change for the better. However, wider-reaching enrichment partnerships to ensure pupils develop a sense of global citizenship are more limited.

The school has a shared understanding of spirituality that is spontaneously expressed within the curriculum throughout the day. For example, joyous singing in worship or reflection during forest school encourages thought-provoking contemplation built on the vision. However, whilst staff and leaders recognise that spirituality shapes life at school, there is no shared language to express this. This limits the extent to which pupils' spiritual growth can be planned, and its impact across the curriculum evaluated.

Collective worship is central to promoting the vision and is the focal point of the school day. It is inclusive and maintains Polehampton's Christian distinctiveness. The weekly pattern of worship is thoughtfully planned. It is ably supported by church leaders. Its content successfully addresses the needs of pupils so that their experience is age-appropriate. For example, a simple communal call at the beginning of worship sets the scene for a special time of day. Worship fosters a sense of personal growth as pupils learn to be supportive to those around them. They recall Bible stories that they explain 'teach us to show our own shining light'. For instance, they recognise the story of the Good Samaritan as a template for supporting troubled friends and thus shining themselves. In times of worship in class, pupils experience quiet, to pray or reflect. During these moments pebbles, with crosses on, are held by pupils. This sensory experience focuses young minds. It allows individuals to build on messages delivered during collective worship through encountering personal and spiritual moments. Consequently, worship is enhancing pupils' spiritual experience and enabling opportunities for them to experience spiritual flourishing. Clergy deliver sessions around faith and spirituality in addition to their weekly support of worship. This includes working with staff to create pupil prayer journals. Central to the school building is a small courtyard. In this peaceful area pupils are able to sit quietly and reflect or pray.

Leaders are proactive in addressing circumstances that might affect the mental health and wellbeing of staff. Notably, wise decisions take teachers' workload into account. Cohesive relationships amongst staff exemplify the school's vision. This is seen in the emotional and practical support they offer each other, and kindness shown during challenging times. Furthermore, staff have a clear focus on nurture for pupils. Those in their care 'shine brightly' and this is achieved through staff modelling the vision. Staff commitment shapes pupils' behaviour. It supports

confident and enthusiastic pupils who live and learn well together. The accessibility of staff, leaders and the pastoral team is appreciated by parents and carers. It is evident that this community effectively lives by its vision in their approach to others around them. Consequently, the school is a harmonious environment where effective wellbeing, support and pastoral care allows ‘dimming lights to be restored’.

RE is expertly led and managed. It has an age-appropriate emphasis on asking questions, gathering information, and reflecting. This allows pupils to appreciate a wide range of lives and cultures. Understanding is further developed through stimulating experiences created for pupils to engage with a range of world faiths. For example, via virtual tours, they enter mosques and synagogues. This creates excitement and captivates the imagination of pupils who are eager to learn about wide range of viewpoints. These immersive experiences enable them to develop a deeper comprehension of the faiths they study. The additional study of worldviews enable the RE curriculum to reflect modern Britain more accurately. Effective support is given for staff to build on their subject knowledge and practice. All those who teach RE receive training from TKAT and the diocese. This means staff are confident to deliver the subject. RE is regularly assessed and revised to ensure it remains well-balanced, diverse, and relevant to Polehampton’s community. Additionally, moderation of pupils’ work internally, and with other TKAT schools, enables leaders to establish clearly defined progression in learning.

Living out the school's vision has created a community where pupils and adults routinely celebrate opportunities to shine. As a result Polehampton Infant School is a place where all can flourish.

The inspection findings indicate that Polehampton Church of England Infant School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	21 May 2024	URN	147556
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	178
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation	The Keys Academy Trust		
Head of Polehampton Schools	Liz Castell Helen Medcalf		
Chair	James Smith		
Inspector	Delia Sheppard	No.	942